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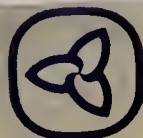
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DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT

PROSPECTS FOR THE ST. CLAIR REGION

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June 1972

PHASE I:

A report
on the issues,
conflicts and
trends that
should guide
citizens,
community leaders
and planners
in shaping
the region's
future.

JUNE 1972

Ontario Ministry of Treasury, Economics
and Intergovernmental Affairs
W. Darcy McKeough, Minister
H. I. Macdonald, Deputy Minister

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study could never have been produced without the co-operation and assistance of a great many organizations and individuals. The Regional Development Branch is particularly grateful to the people of the region, including the St. Clair Regional Development Council (whose *Five-Year Program* was especially useful), the St. Clair Regional Advisory Board, municipal councils and staffs, members of the business community, industrial commissioners, members of the academic community and various government departments.



WHAT THIS REPORT HOPES TO ACCOMPLISH

The most important point to note about this booklet is this: although it deals with the question of how the St. Clair Region might best be developed, it is *not a plan* for the region's development.

Rather, it is an analysis intended to stimulate discussion about the future of the region, among the people who live and work there. It will be supported by a much longer, more technical paper resulting from many, many months of investigation and analysis. Copies of the technical report will be available on request.

This booklet evaluates the region's social, economic and environmental trends, examines its prospects and suggests long-range goals for its development. To stimulate discussion it also offers examples of development approaches which, while not intended to be applied in the simple forms described, nevertheless illustrate different ways in which the region's growth could be shaped.

This is the sixth report on regions in southern Ontario. Papers on the Niagara,

Midwestern Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and Toronto-Centred regions have already appeared. Two other reports, on the Eastern Ontario and Georgian Bay regions, will be published shortly.

The Ontario government expects this report to provide a sound basis for the beginning of a long-term development plan for the St. Clair Region.

After this analysis has been widely discussed and further work has been done, the government will publish additional reports on the region, setting out specific policy recommendations and suggesting ways of acting upon them.

Once a plan has been agreed upon by all levels of government and by the people of the region, it will serve as a guide for governments, businessmen, industrialists, developers and others whose decisions affect the pattern and the future of the region.

Regional development is a program initiated in 1966 to guide, encourage and assist the orderly and rational development of each of the province's regions.

The basic aims of the program are to enhance the quality of life for the people of Ontario, to encourage private enterprise to prosper within a healthy and balanced community, to improve the effectiveness of provincial services in each region and to conserve our natural resources for the benefit of all the people of the province.

THE ST. CLAIR REGION: "LAND BRIDGE" TO THE UNITED STATES

The St. Clair Region, one of the most productive agricultural areas in Ontario, is made up of three counties — Essex, Kent and Lambton. It has a population of more than 500,000, with over three-quarters of its people living in cities, towns and villages. The two largest cities, Windsor and Sarnia, contain more than half the population of the whole region — for several reasons. One is that they are major ports of entry. Another is the proximity of Metropolitan Detroit. A third reason is that they are appropriate settings for two major industries — oil refining and petro-chemicals in Sarnia's case, and automobile manufacturing in Windsor's.

The third major city of the region is Chatham, a service centre for the surrounding farm area, which also employs many people in the manufacture of transportation equipment.

Geographically, the St. Clair Region serves as what might be called a "land bridge" between the rest of southwestern Ontario and the Detroit-Port Huron area of the United States. While such a location might seem to make the region an important gateway to the United States as a market for Ontario goods, U.S. tariffs in many instances prevent such goods from competing successfully. (One exception is the tariff-free automotive industry.)

In the context of Ontario alone, the region is located at the western end of the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway, which some planners have called "the grand trunk". This corridor, extending as it does from Windsor through London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Toronto and beyond, has done much to relieve the region's isolation from the hub of activity centred in Metropolitan Toronto.

Even at that, because of its proximity to Detroit and other major U.S. cities, the region tends to orient its activities and interests to those of the United States. One conspicuous example is the leading industry of the region — automobiles and parts — which is geared heavily to serve U.S. needs. The region gets much of its "American atmosphere" as well from major U.S. radio and TV networks, whose programs are readily received on the Canadian side.

While Detroit is unquestionably the leading urban influence on the area, the city of London cannot be ignored in any assessment of the region's dynamics. Though it is outside the region (it is part of the neighboring Lake Erie Region) London provides the St. Clair Region with many services, such as government offices, social and economic activities, health and education facilities. London's influence on the St. Clair Region will probably increase in future.



The Region is strategically located in the Development Corridor linking Montreal and Detroit

ST. CLAIR DEVELOPMENT REGION

DEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR

50 0 50 100
scale in miles



HOW—AND WHERE—THE ST. CLAIR REGION IS GROWING

Because of the way its population is concentrated, the St. Clair Region can be described as consisting, functionally, of three urban-centred areas — the Windsor area, the Sarnia area and the Chatham area. Virtually every town and village in the region is linked by highway to at least one of these three urban centres, since each provides many of the jobs and most of the services (retail stores, trades, professions, hospitals, colleges and so on) for its area. For the same reason, these three cities have attracted most of the population growth occurring in recent years. According to estimates from the 1971 census, Windsor's population between 1966 and 1971 grew by 10,700. This amounted to more than one-third of the whole region's growth and almost half the growth occurring in Essex County. Meanwhile, Chatham attracted 56 per cent of the growth in Kent County, and Sarnia got 44 per cent of the growth in Lambton County.

“Virtually every town in the region is linked by highway to one or more of the cities”

ST. CLAIR DEVELOPMENT REGION



General Features

LEGEND

- MAJOR RIBBON DEVELOPMENT
- REGIONAL BOUNDARY



TRENDS AND ASSETS AS THEY NOW SHAPE THE REGION

RIBBON DEVELOPMENT

Quite apart from the tendency for the population to concentrate, more and more, in and around the three urban centres, the townships in recent years have been experiencing an increasing amount of development, particularly along highways and lakeshores. Non-farm development (such as housing, stores and other commercial establishments) is particularly evident in county and township roads in western Essex and along rural stretches of four highways: Highway 3 from Windsor towards Essex and Leamington; Highway 18 between Windsor and Amherstburg; Highway 2 from Windsor towards Belle River; and Highway 40 between Sarnia and Wallaceburg.

Urban growth has meanwhile been taking place along these riverbanks and shorelines: Lake Huron, from Sarnia to Brights Grove; the St. Clair River, from Sarnia south towards Wallaceburg; Lake St. Clair, from Windsor to Belle River; and Lake Erie, in the Kingsville-Leamington area.

Such ribbon development is bad for the region. The highways become clogged with slow, local traffic. Services such as water mains and sewers cost more than they should because they are strung out over long distances. Houses, clubs and cottages block off public access to shoreline needed for recreation. Conflicts arise between rural people and urban-oriented people, who have differing views about the way the land should be used.

So far, the situation has been hard to control because many of these areas do not have effective official plans. It will likely get

worse in future unless adequate municipal and regional guidelines are adopted.

A SOUNDLY BASED ECONOMY

Economically, the St. Clair Region has a strong base composed of its agriculture, its industry and its recreational resources. Its industrial growth has been greater than the provincial average, and its income levels have been higher.

AGRICULTURE

No other region of southern Ontario has the favourable combination of climate, soil and topography that enables the St. Clair Region to support a thriving and diversified agricultural industry. The region is especially noted for its production of corn, soybeans, wheat and canning crops such as tomatoes, fruit juices and peaches. Blessed with excellent natural conditions, the farmers of the region have applied good management to make their operations highly efficient and productive. Drainage systems, for example, have enabled farmers to put their land to more intensive use.

Nevertheless, jobs in farming have become scarcer, because of farm consolidation, mechanization and part-time farming. And in some cases where good opportunities remain — as in feedlots and horticulture — the amounts of capital needed are so large that many people, especially young people, find it hard or impossible to get started.

INDUSTRY

Out of the region's agriculture has grown a large food and beverage industry. This industry, along with automotive and petroleum products, account for a high proportion of the manufacturing done in the region. Those three industries, along with others supporting the automotive industry, account for more than 85 per cent of the manufacturing production and jobs in the St. Clair Region.

Windsor's automotive industry, begun early in the century, was strengthened considerably with the signing in 1965 of the Canada-United States Agreement on Automotive Products. The new stimulation came about largely through a provision for tariff-

free shipment of automobiles and component parts between the two countries. Meanwhile, supporting industries became attracted to the region more than ever. Some of these established themselves there with the help of the Federal Area Development Agency, which was encouraging new industry in Chatham, Wallaceburg and Windsor.

The petroleum industry, established in Lambton County during the 1890s and originally based on the area's oil reserves, underwent considerable expansion in the 1940s and 1950s, first as part of the war effort, then as a processing centre for crude oil piped from western Canada. Although production in and around Sarnia continued to increase during the 1960s, mechanization and automation have prevented job opportunities from increasing proportionately.

In smaller centres of the region, the provincial program called Equalization for Industrial Opportunities has helped attract new industries. Between 1968 and 1971, this program helped bring four new industries into the region and encouraged three other plants to expand. This program is under review, with the object of tying it into the regional policies for the area.

RECREATION

The St. Clair Region is fortunately bordered by lakes and rivers that provide good opportunities for an attractive assortment of recreational facilities. Among the best recreational shorelines are the sand beaches at Rondeau, Point Pelee, Pinery-Ipperwash and Brights Grove. As well, there are marshlands which place the region along one of the major flyways used by North America's migratory waterfowl. With ducks, geese and other water birds abounding, the region is thus important as a sanctuary and feeding ground for birds and as an attraction for bird-watchers, nature photographers and hunters. The major marshlands are located at the St. Clair delta, along the eastern shore of Lake St. Clair, on River Canard, along the shores of Rondeau Bay and at the Point Pelee Ponds.

Almost all the best shoreline is either in public parks or private cottage properties.

Some 40 major parks offer diverse forms of public recreation. Also, the St. Clair Parkway Commission has been quite successful in the continuing development of a scenic parkway from Point Edward to Mitchell Bay, along Highway 40.

For future planning, two points about recreation and tourism deserve attention. First, the region's recreational attractions are pretty well confined to the waterways and shorelines; few attractions are inland. Second, about one visitor in every three is from the United States; when future recreational needs are assessed, this external demand will have to be taken into account.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The St. Clair Region is made up of 70 local jurisdictions — cities, counties, towns, villages and townships. As urban development has spread, new needs have arisen, and local governments have tried to meet these needs, often by annexing neighbouring jurisdictions. Such annexations were often successful in the past, but in recent years sprawling urban growth has made it hard for cities and towns to control the form and pattern of growth outside their boundaries. At the same time, peripheral townships themselves have not been able to handle rapid urban growth. As a result, growth has generally been haphazard and disorderly. New residents have needed services which local governments could not provide economically, and this situation in turn has meant new problems for both urban and rural municipalities.

To many rural municipalities the answer seems to lie in attracting industry in order to increase tax revenue. But in the competition for industry, a rural municipality soon finds that its rivals include many other rural municipalities with the same needs and attractions — plus cities that want industry and can afford to lure it with better basic services (water, sewers, hydro lines) than the municipality can afford.

Clearly, any regional plan that hopes to solve the problem of urban sprawl must go far beyond the conventional "more industry, more assessment" approach.

THREE VITAL ISSUES TO CONTEND WITH: URBAN GROWTH, THE ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT

The St. Clair Region has great potential for future development, but it will not realize that potential unless certain issues and problems are taken into account. Some, such as urban growth, pollution, and the need for local government restructuring, are common to many Ontario regions and therefore should be dealt with at the regional and provincial levels. Others, though perhaps not unique to the St. Clair Region, are important enough to warrant special consideration in any regional plan that may be developed. In the St. Clair Region, the most vital of those issues are urban growth, the changing economy, and threats to the environment.

URBAN GROWTH

By the year 2001, the population of the St. Clair Region will likely be somewhere between 700,000 and 800,000. Most of the growth between now and then will likely take place in Essex County, mainly within Greater Windsor. Little change is expected in Sarnia and Chatham; both will continue growing but will not have as high a proportion of the region's population as they have now.

Unless guidelines and controls are introduced, housing developments will continue expanding throughout townships surrounding Windsor, Sarnia and Chatham and along the lakeshores. It is understandable why many people want to live outside the cities

and enjoy pleasures of country living; but all residents of the region should be aware that there can be a high price attached to this pleasure — in economic costs (such as duplication of the services the community is obliged to provide) and in social costs (such as the lack of a good community hall or a dearth of community spirit).

THE CHANGING ECONOMY

Nearly half the working people in the St. Clair Region are in service jobs — chiefly retailing, wholesaling, personal services, the professions, government services. Experience elsewhere shows that the more urban and industrialized a region becomes, the greater the number of people needed in service industries. Meanwhile, automation and mechanization will likely reduce the number of manufacturing jobs available. These two simultaneous trends in the future are important to keep in mind when devising a regional plan.

A second point to keep in mind is that the amount of influence that the region can hope to bring to bear on its own major industries is very slight. The future of the automotive and associated industries will be determined mostly by the economic policies set out by the Canadian and United States governments. The petroleum industry is similarly international in scope (though it does have local physical needs whose growth can be guided by proper allocation of land). Growth of the food and beverage industry will depend to a large extent on the agricultural policies set out by the governments of Canada and Ontario. Local governments can also have difficulty mustering broad enough influence for the planning and zoning necessary to protect agricultural lands from urban sprawl.

Because the region has this dependence on provincial, national and international policies, any plan for the region must be flexible enough to accommodate changes that might occur in these policies in the future.

Agriculture will continue to be vital to the region's economy. As now, crops will be

of wide variety, livestock will flourish, and greenhouse operations, especially in Essex County, will continue expanding. A good future for agriculture can be foreseen because the farmers of the region have demonstrated a remarkable adaptability to new conditions by mechanizing, specializing and applying modern methods of farm management. There will always be new challenges, of course, and among the most formidable will be changes in consumer demand, in the pricing mechanism, and in negotiated trade agreements. Supply management programs — means by which the agricultural inventory is kept in proper balance — seem likely to preoccupy farmers to an increasing extent in the future.

THREATS TO THE ENVIRONMENT

In a province where public concern about the environment is great and growing, the St. Clair Region has its share — perhaps more than its share — of environmental problems.

Water pollution, a serious problem in the region's waterways for years, became an even more dramatic issue recently with the discovery of mercury in Lake St. Clair, southern Lake Huron, western Lake Erie and the St. Clair and Detroit rivers. As a result, fishing in these waters has been restricted.

Air pollution is prevalent because of heavy industries in the region and in neighbouring parts of Michigan.

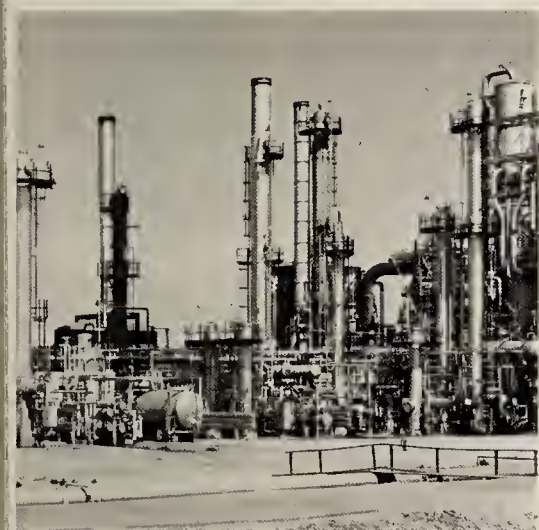
Wind erosion of farmlands is a serious concern because most of the terrain is flat, with few trees. The Ontario government is working closely with local county, township and agricultural organizations to help landowners plant windbreaks. Authorities also hope to prevent destruction of the remaining forests.

Flooding and water erosion are additional threats to the land. Flooding occurs locally throughout the region during peak periods of runoff. Major floods have occurred on the Sydenham and Thames rivers and on River Canard and their tributaries. Virtually all the lakes and rivers are eroding their banks, with the worst erosion along the Lake Erie shoreline. Flooding and erosion

should be taken into account in any plan for the region.

Sewage treatment facilities are lacking in some municipalities, with septic tanks in general use. There, population increases have made this method of sewage disposal inadequate.

Water supplies are not a continuing problem except in a few developing townships. Most municipalities have good water, and those that do not are either working on remedies or have drawn up plans to do so.





“WHAT KIND OF REGION DO WE WANT?”

Regional development goals are concerned with the most basic question the people of any region can ask: “What kind of region do we want?”

Their answer, of course, depends on their needs and desires, and so these must determine what goals are set.

Setting the right goals is difficult, however, because they have to satisfy many different requirements at once. Provincial and regional authorities, for instance, usually see regional development in quite different terms, yet the goals they seek must satisfy both. And there is a difference as well between *provincial* goals for regional development and *regional* goals.



Provincial goals are goals formulated to help meet objectives that apply to all regions throughout the province. A regional goal is a goal set to help solve a problem (or several problems) that may exist only in that one region.

The Ontario Government's basic policies for regional development were first spelled out in the 1966 White Paper, *Design for Development*. In simple terms they can be summed up this way:

1. The government recognizes that private enterprise is vital to the provincial economy. The government intends to keep assessing the contribution of the private sector to see how it matches the needs and resources of the province. The government will develop policies to encourage the private sector to grow in a desirable and rational way.
2. The government wants to help develop in each region a social and economic climate in which people, as individuals, can use their capabilities to the fullest.
3. Policies should be adopted to encourage development of natural resources while conserving the aesthetic qualities of the environment.
4. The government should plan and carry out its spending in such a way as to benefit the regions, as well as the province as a whole, as much as possible.
5. The regional development program must be a working partnership between the people and the government.

(For actual wording of these principles as endorsed by the cabinet, see column 3 on this page.)

Provincial principles are important to regional development for two reasons:

First, because the province is made up of ten regional units, provincial goals must be realized at the regional level.

Second, when an individual region adopts goals of its own, they must be compatible with the goals set for the province as a whole.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REGIONAL GOALS

This report has outlined several broad issues that must be considered in the future development of the St. Clair Region. The choice of goals is important because whatever goals are chosen must serve as principles to strive for in developing the region's potential. Goals are also useful as a means of evaluating different ways in which the region might grow. Here are some suggested goals that reflect the important regional issues while indicating one direction in which the region might develop:

1. To avoid a pattern of urban growth now resulting in unsightly and uneconomic sprawl, in favour of a system of compact urban communities.
2. To maintain and promote agriculture so that the region remains one of Ontario's most important producers of farm commodities.
3. To promote the development of recreational facilities and related services so as to meet the demand for increased leisure activity.
4. To preserve the quality of the environment by maintaining all desirable attributes of the landscape and by minimizing pollution of water, air and land.
5. To provide a plan with such flexibility that the region's economy can readily adapt to changes in national and continental policies and to changes in technology.

The task of realizing the region's potential will not be easy. Different planning policies may be needed in different areas of the region, as a means of meeting local conditions while working toward the goals set for the region as a whole.

CABINET'S ENUNCIATION OF PROVINCIAL GOALS

Here is the way the provincial Cabinet has expressed its fundamental policies affecting regional development:

1. That the vital role of the private sector be recognized, that its contribution to the provincial economy be continually assessed in view of provincial needs and resources, and that provincial policies be found to encourage a rational expansion of the private sector.
2. That individuals be encouraged to develop their full capabilities through provision of a climate of expanding social and economic opportunities for each region.
3. That regional and resource policies encourage adequate development of the natural environment while conserving the aesthetic qualities of that environment.
4. That the timing and impact of Ontario's large and expanding expenditures be planned and co-ordinated effectively to fulfill in an orderly way, the needs of the regions in the province as well as of the province itself.
5. That this be a program for regional development which must necessarily involve a working partnership between all of the people of Ontario and government.

HOW DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES PRODUCE DIFFERENT PATTERNS OF GROWTH

“If present trends continue, municipalities would be hard pressed to provide the basic services needed”

The goals suggested in the previous section — or other comparable goals that may be arrived at through public discussion and specialized studies — could be achieved in many different ways.

This booklet does not presume to suggest which course the people of the St. Clair Region should choose.

Instead, having described present trends and issues, this booklet offers a series of three diagrammed maps with examples showing how different techniques of encouragement and control can produce widely differing patterns of growth. The three approaches set out on the six pages beginning overleaf are explanations that have been simplified so that their basic elements can be quickly and easily distinguished. In practice, they would have to be much more complex, drawing on many other ideas and incorporating conditions peculiar to individual areas of the region.

The diagrammed map on the opposite page shows what will happen if the region's present growth continues. The fifth and final diagrammed map (page 21) is the suggested plan from the Urban Detroit Area Study (UDA Study) which was financed by a private corporation. Although the UDA plan is not necessarily endorsed by the South-eastern Michigan Council of Governments, which is the area's official planning body, it is shown here as an illustration of ideas advanced by others.

The plan that is ultimately adopted for the region will likely be a combination of several approaches — a compromise drawing on several of the approaches shown here and several others.

It is hoped that studying these approaches will help the people of the St. Clair Region to make important and valuable suggestions that contribute significantly to a plan for the region.

LIVING WITH PRESENT TRENDS

If the trends now evident in the St. Clair Region were allowed to continue, most of the growth would occur in Windsor, Sarnia and Chatham, with some minor growth in the larger towns. For this reason, the cities would play increasingly important roles in the region, and population would tend to build up in the surrounding rural areas. Most small towns and villages would either remain the size they are now or decline somewhat while continuing to provide some daily needs and services for the surrounding residents.



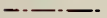
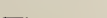
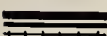

Windsor would remain the region's major city, but London would provide increasingly more social, cultural and economic services to the eastern part of the St. Clair Region.

The only plans influencing the shape of the region would be those of certain individual communities — plus proposals made individually by provincial government departments. No government action would be taken to influence local trends as such.

Linear or “ribbon” development would continue haphazardly along highways and shorelines, and municipalities would be hard pressed to provide these new residents, merchants and others with the basic services they needed. New problems in pollution would likely become evident. As more shoreline was developed for private use, the public would have less access than before to recreational lands.

Trends



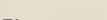



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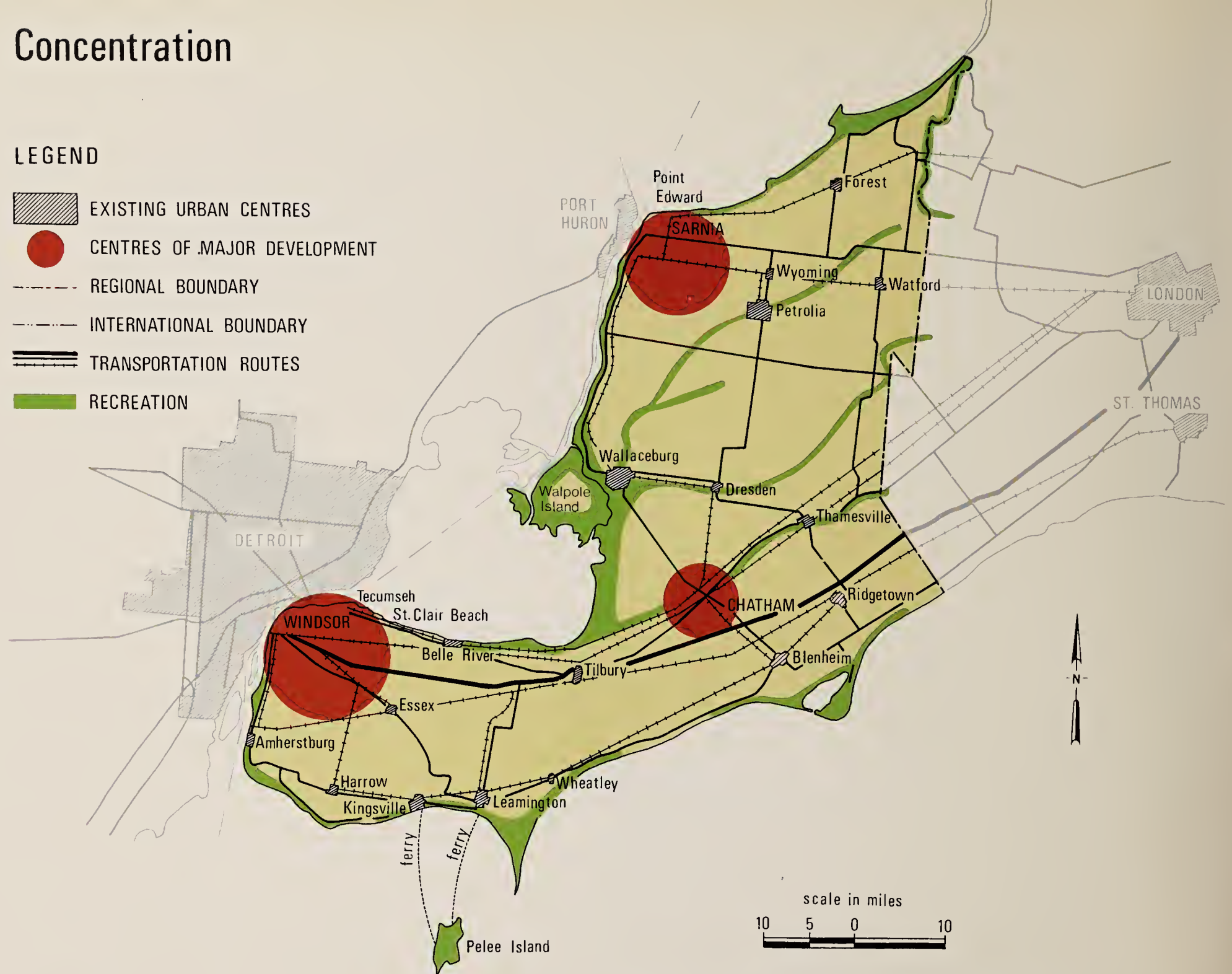
-  EXISTING URBAN CENTRES
-  INTENSITY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT
-  REGIONAL BOUNDARY
-  INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
-  TRANSPORTATION ROUTES
-  RECREATION



Concentration

LEGEND

-  EXISTING URBAN CENTRES
-  CENTRES OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENT
-  REGIONAL BOUNDARY
-  INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
-  TRANSPORTATION ROUTES
-  RECREATION



TECHNIQUE I: ENCOURAGE ALL GROWTH IN THE THREE MAJOR CITIES

In devising a plan for the region, one approach would be to encourage all future development to take place in Windsor, Sarnia and Chatham while discouraging all other parts of the region from more than minimal growth. Towns, villages and rural regions would retain their present identities, but measures could be taken to prevent social and economic differences from becoming too great between the three major cities and the rest of the region.

This approach might seem much like what is happening in the region now. One difference, however, is that with this technique, all growth would be structured and planned within the three cities; growth in the surrounding townships would be prohibited or at least discouraged. The three cities would contain virtually all the region's social and cultural facilities, and most new jobs would be there too.



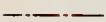
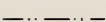
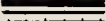

Present "ribbon" developments along the lake-shores and rivers would be stopped, with the land reserved for recreation or simply kept as open space.

Good means of transportation would be needed to link the rest of the region with its three dominant cities.

“ ‘Concentration’ would mean structuring all growth within three cities. Growth in surrounding townships would be either prohibited or discouraged”

Growth Centres

LEGEND

-  EXISTING URBAN CENTRES
-  EXAMPLES OF SELECTED GROWTH CENTRES
-  REGIONAL BOUNDARY
-  INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
-  TRANSPORTATION ROUTES
-  RECREATION



**TECHNIQUE II:
DISTRIBUTE SOME GROWTH
THROUGHOUT SELECTED TOWNS**

This approach would strive for more equal distribution of social and economic activity than is now occurring or than would occur if Technique I were employed. Technique II would leave the greatest amount of growth still occurring in the three major cities; however, a significant amount of growth would also be encouraged in a few selected towns, such as Amherstburg, Essex, Leamington, Petrolia, Tilbury and Wallaceburg.



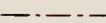

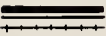

If growth could be distributed in this way, people in many parts of the region would have job opportunities and services (shopping, trades, hospitals, and so on) close at hand. The present pressures of growth, particularly in Windsor and Sarnia, would be reduced. Amherstburg and Essex, while providing new job opportunities, would also house people working in Windsor. Petrolia could do the same for Sarnia. Leamington, Tilbury and Wallaceburg could serve as population centres, providing jobs and services for people in other parts of the region.

This approach would call for increased local planning by the municipalities involved, so as to handle the new growth and keep undesirable effects on the rural landscape to a minimum.

“This technique would mean encouraging growth in three cities and in half a dozen towns”

Dispersion

LEGEND:

-  EXISTING URBAN CENTRES
-  CENTRES OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENT
-  REGIONAL BOUNDARY
-  INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
-  TRANSPORTATION ROUTES
-  RECREATION



**TECHNIQUE III:
DISPERSE ALL GROWTH
AS WIDELY AS POSSIBLE**

This approach, a direct reverse of present trends, calls for the widest possible dispersal of growth. This would be accomplished by encouraging most towns and villages to grow while restraining the region's three cities.

While the growth permitted in Windsor, Sarnia and Chatham would be sustained by their own economies, much public investment would be needed to make the towns and villages grow. Subsidies would also be required to attract employers (and thus create jobs) and to provide the facilities that new residents would need.

Providing community services to such a scattered population would be costly. In some instances, recreational land along the lakeshores would have to be turned over to housing developers and industries for their own use.

This approach would bring about a considerable change in the present structure of the region, and municipalities would have to plan carefully and extensively to handle the growth without ill effects.

“Dispersing growth widely would call for much public investment to make many towns and villages grow”



ONE PRIVATE PROPOSAL FOR RESHAPING THE REGION





Would the St. Clair Region be better off with two new cities? This suggestion was made in a private study of the Detroit area carried out over the past several years. The part of the plan involving the St. Clair Region is presented here as a matter of interest. The study suggested a major change in the pattern of the region's development, to complement the development it was proposing for the Detroit-Port Huron area.

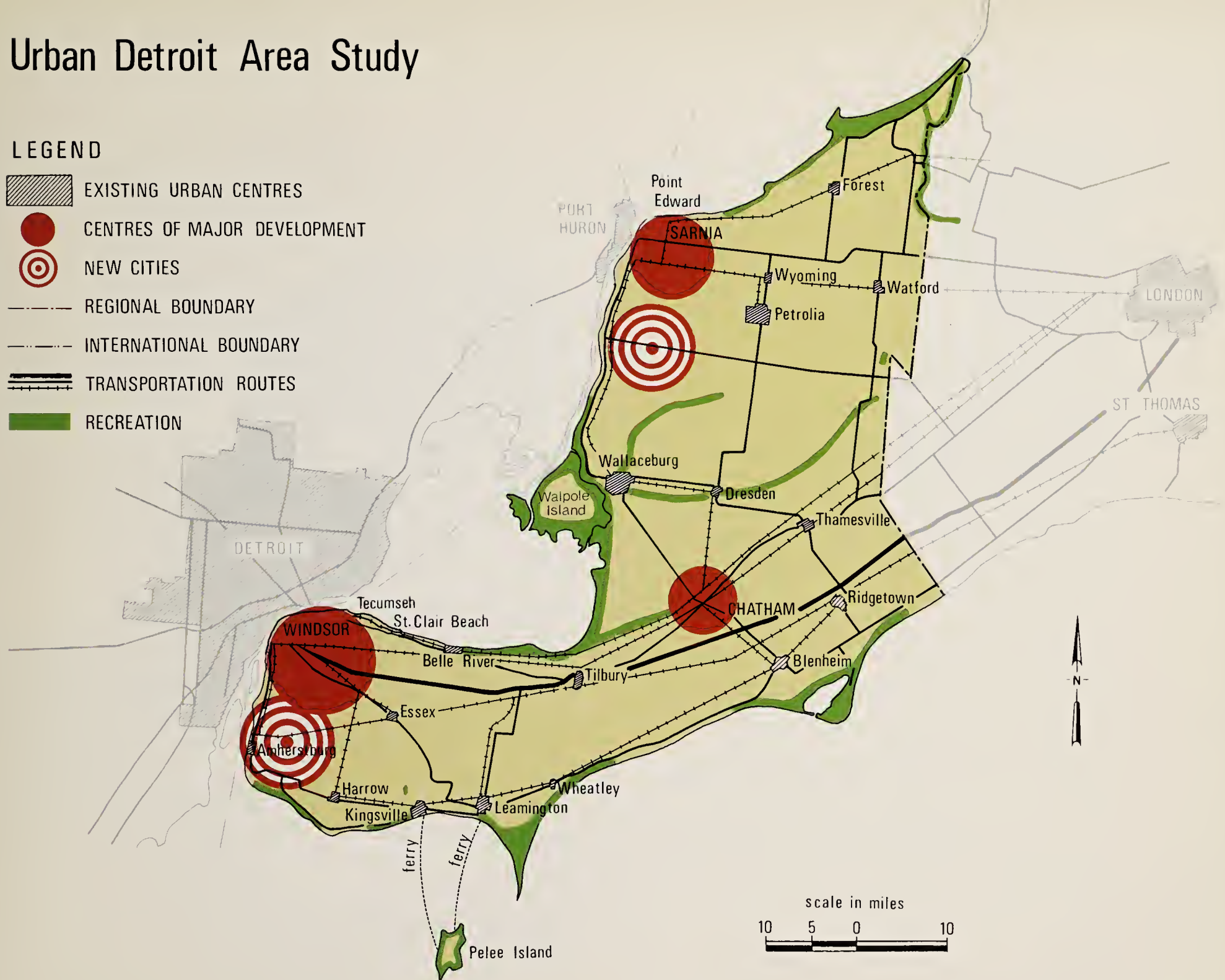
Among its suggestions was establishment of two new cities. One, located directly south of Sarnia, would be focussed on a new high-speed east-west transportation corridor linking it with a proposed new city in St. Clair County, Michigan. Another new city on the Canadian side would be located south of Windsor. By the year 2000 it would be about the size Windsor is now.

In the Ontario government's view, this whole proposal has serious drawbacks. For one thing, it is questionable whether the region would be able to support two new cities of such size. And if they were developed, urban encroachment would destroy most of the recreational potential of lands along the St. Clair and Detroit rivers. Meanwhile, agricultural land further back from the rivers and along major highways would be lost to urban encroachment.

Urban Detroit Area Study

LEGEND

-  EXISTING URBAN CENTRES
-  CENTRES OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENT
-  NEW CITIES
-  REGIONAL BOUNDARY
-  INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
-  TRANSPORTATION ROUTES
-  RECREATION



SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN DISCUSSING WHAT'S BEST FOR THE ST. CLAIR REGION

Each of the approaches described on pages 14 to 19 has its strengths and its drawbacks. Some residents may even decide there is nothing wrong with leaving present trends to continue as they are — though they might find it hard to ignore the effects of urban sprawl, with its tendency to encroach on recreational and agricultural lands; ribbon development, with its attendant congestion along highways and lakeshores; and overcrowding in the region's three principal cities.

The solutions to such issues depend to some extent how the people involved feel about them. If growing urbanization means a need for new sewers and water mains, how willing are new residents to pay for installing such services far outside the cities? Are the region's residents willing to see housing creep along the highways and lakeshores, or would they prefer to see these lands used for recreation and open space? How do rural people feel about the growing urbanization of townships? Are there potential conflicts of land use? Problems of pollution? Difficulties in achieving farm consolidation and efficiency?

Present trends are not, of course, the only ones which give rise to questions and pose a need for intelligent choices.

Applying the technique by which most growth would be concentrated in Windsor, Sarnia and Chatham has advantages but also gives rise to important questions. The concentrated approach would provide certain economies — in minimizing the cost of transporting goods to markets and consumers, for instance. Concentrated development would also mean a concentrated labour supply, larger local markets and diversified systems of transportation. (And, as a refinement of that approach, each city might develop differing specialities in regional services: one might specialize in retailing and entertainment; another in medical services; a third in banking, insurance and other financial services.) The "concentrated growth" approach would also help keep down the costs of water mains, sewers and other community services and would leave a good proportion of rural lands free for recreation, farming and open space. Planned urbanization of course brings its own series of questions: What kind of cities do residents want? What services and facilities seem necessary or desirable? Are there enough parks? How can cities be made more interesting places to live and work?

Some of the advantages of spreading growth among certain selected centres seem immediately obvious. People would be able to live and work in either a city, a town or a village, according to individual preferences. Yet the countryside could be preserved for recreation and farming. Here again, questions arise: Which centres should be selected for growth? What additional costs would have to be borne by residents of the centres selected? What sort of incentives would be needed to attract people and employers to these centres? How large would the centres have to become to be feasible and efficient? Would it be a good idea to concentrate job development in Windsor, Sarnia and Chatham while encouraging working people to commute from homes in outlying towns and villages?

Finally, the approach calling for wide dispersal of growth throughout the region raises its own peculiar problems and ques-

tions. Spreading jobs widely may sound like the fairest plan of all, but is it economic? Wouldn't companies have to pay more for many services (such as equipment repairs, external auditing, contracted janitorial services and so on) if they were scattered so widely that no central services were practical? Wouldn't much duplication exist from one town to another in both business and municipal services? Wouldn't many companies find it difficult to thrive, and wouldn't some speciality businesses (high-fashion shops and gourmet restaurants, for instance) find it impossible to survive? Would some industries move out and potential newcomers avoid the region? And what would meanwhile be happening to the countryside — would it gradually become engulfed by growing towns and criss-crossing highways?

As they think about and discuss the pros and cons of various approaches that might become part of a master plan, the people of the St. Clair Region should try to assess the needs and best interests of the region as a whole, rather than those of a single city or town.

They should also consider the nature of local governments, to see whether they should be changed in structure to make the most of any given approach. For instance, is it likely that the concentrated-growth approach would call for the same form of local government as the selected-growth approach?

How much inter-municipal co-operation would be needed to carry out a regional plan effectively? How do individual municipal plans (where they exist at all) fit into the concept of a regional plan? To what extent can a regional plan be expected to overcome the rivalries that exist between the region's cities and towns in their struggles to increase revenues by attracting new industries and other heavy new taxpayers?

These, then are among the dozens of dozens of questions that need to be asked, debated and — ultimately — answered before any workable plan for the region can be devised.



HOW YOU CAN PLAY A PART

This report contains a review of development patterns as they have taken place in the St. Clair Region. In recent years the region's economy has enjoyed a healthy growth that has influenced settlement patterns and the trend toward concentration. Inevitably, certain problems and constraints also exist for the region.

The region's prospects and problems are all spelled out briefly but clearly to give every resident a chance to weigh the pros and cons of the choices that must be made if the St. Clair Region is to enjoy the benefits of a carefully designed plan.

Soon after this report is issued, a series of public meetings will be held to discuss the contents and to give everyone who is interested a chance to react to it.

Briefs and other submissions are invited, for they can be most useful in helping create a plan that really reflects the wishes of the people.

To make any regional plan a success there must be a solid effort from all levels of government, plus a full, frank and thoughtful expression of views from municipal organizations, other public groups, businessmen, industrial leaders, farmers and other citizens.

Only with your help and participation can this program provide the guidance and controls that will enable the St. Clair Region to become the community you would like it to be.

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Ontario. Regional Development E
Design for development :
prospects for the St. Clair
c.2
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mai

You are invited to send your suggestions
and comments on this report to:

The Honourable W. Darcy McKeough,
The Treasurer of Ontario,
Queen's Park,
Toronto 5, Ontario.

